SEVERAL

METHODS

OF

READING

THE

HOLY SCRIPTURES

In PRIVATE;

Seriouſly Recommended to Conſideration and Uſe.

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THE

PREFACE.

THAT the Holy Scripture is of Divine Authority, and excellently fitted to afford all the Aſſiſtance we can need from it, in our Way towards Heaven, appears from the well known Words of St. Paul, * All Scripture is given by Inſpiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, that the Man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good Works.

That all Chriſtians are to be plentifully ſtored with Knowledge thence, we may learn from the ſame Apoſtle's Exhortation, § Let the Word of Chriſt dwell in you richly in all Wiſdom.

The following Directions, which, in the firſt Scheme of them, were part of a Sermon, preached long ſince, are deſigned to promote Plenty of Scriptural Knowledge: May the Bleſſing of God make them effectual to that excellent Purpoſe.

* 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17. § Col. iii. 16.

Nor will it, it is hoped, be thought Presumption, that an Aged Clergyman humbly invites his younger Brethren at the same Time to give Attendance * to Reading *the Holy Scripture, and to partake of the Satisfaction of doing so.*

All I have further to add, in Way of Preface, is the following earneſt Prayer; That the ſincere and conſtant Belief, and Profeſſion of the Truth, which the bleſſed Book propoſes; and the uniform perſevering Practice of the Duties, which, upon the beſt Encouragements, it requires, may preſerve this Church (which abundantly owns the ‖ *Sufficiency of it for Salvation) in a ſafe, peaceable, flouriſhing Condition; the Bulwark of the Reformed Religion, and the Glory of* Chriſtendom, *till Time ſhall be no more. This is a Prayer in which all, who deſire to be found faithful Miniſters, or ſound Members of it, will readily join, with their*

Moſt Obedient

humble Servant.

* 1 Tim. iv. 13. See St *Chryſoſtom* on this Place.
‖ Article VI.

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THE firſt of the five Methods offered to Conſideration in this ſmall Tract is, to read in private according to the Direction of the Church of *England* for the Publick Reading both of the Pſalter, and the Reſt of the holy Scripture; to be ſeen before the Liturgy.

By a due and careful Uſe of this Method, the Pſalter or Book of *Pſalms*, an admirable Treaſury of Piety and Devotion, of Prayers and Praiſes, ſuitable to

all Occaſions, will be read over (except the *Pſalms* for one or two Days in one Month, and thoſe which give place to proper *Pſalms*) twelve Times every Year. The moſt Part of the Old Teſtament will be read over once, and the New Teſtament (beſides the Epiſtles and Goſpels in their Courſe) thrice; except the Apocalypſe, out of which there are only certain proper Leſſons upon divers Feaſts.

The ſecond Method is of larger extent, and comprehends the Former, and abundantly Supplies what can be ſaid to be wanting in it: For it is, to read the whole Bible according to the Order of the ſeveral Books; and each Day, ſo many Chapters out of the Old and New Teſtament, as are neceſſary for reading both once every Year. This will certainly be done, and ſeveral Weeks ſooner, if every Day three Chapters ſhall be read out of the Old Teſtament, or ſo many *Pſalms*, as are proportionable, and one out of the New. That out of the New, it will be a Pleaſure to Clergymen, and other Scholars, to read in the Original *Greek*.

Nor

Nor will they think much to add the concurrent Hiſtory of both Teſtaments, out of *Joſephus*, the three firſt Books of *Euſebius*'s Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, Archbiſhop *Uſher*'s Annals, and out of other Authors; particularly the Old and New Teſtaments connected in the Hiſtory of the *Jews* and neighbouring Nations by Dr. *Prideaux*, the preſent worthy Dean of *Norwich*, the firſt, ſecond, and third Parts. Let me ſubjoin *Bochartus*'s *Hierozoicon*, his *Phaleg* and *Canaan*; our learned and pious Biſhop *Cumberland*'s Scripture Weights and Meaſures; Dr. *Wells*'s Hiſtorical Geography of the Old and New Teſtament; and Mr. *Maundrel*'s Journey from *Aleppo* to *Jeruſalem*, the beſt Edition.

Some judicious, learned, and well-eſteemed Commentators, Paraphraſts, and Criticks, whether ſuch as have written upon the whole Bible, or on particular Parts, will be proper to be conſulted as we go on; though not at the ſame Time, or in the ſame yearly Courſe.

Such as follow cannot well be omitted: *Fagius* upon the *Pentateuch*, *Munſter*, *Maus* upon *Joſhua*, *Nicholas Fuller*, *Ainſworth* upon the *Pentateuch*, *Gregory*, *Mede*, *Lightfoot*, Biſhop *Hall* upon the hard Texts of the whole divine Scripture, *Grotius*, *Hammond*, *Pocock*, *Patrick*, Dr. *Lowth* upon the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *Jeremiah*, *Lamentations*, with his Directions for the profitable Reading of the holy Scriptures; *Stokes* upon the twelve minor Prophets; *Eraſmus*'s Paraphraſe in *Latin* upon the New Teſtament; the learned Dr. *Whitby* on the ſame, and Mr. *Burkitt*, whoſe ſound pious Matter, greatly encourages to Peruſal: A Paraphraſe and Annotations on all the Epiſtles of St. *Paul*.

If in the Uſe of theſe, and other Commentators and Criticks, ſpecial Reference ſhould be had to that Catalogue of Difficulties in Mr. *Fenton*'s Apparatus, page 122, *&c.* it may be, it is hoped, of no ſmall Advantage.

Nor may this Courſe of Reading be juſtly thought too long, or too painful; nor

nor will it by thoſe who ſhall remember that at our Ordination we ſolemnly promiſed, That we would endeavour, the Lord being our Helper, to be diligent in Reading the holy Scriptures, and in ſuch Studies as help towards the Knowledge of the ſame; laying aſide the Study of the World, and the Fleſh.

The third Method is, to read frequently ſome of the moſt remarkable Places of the holy Scripture.

Let me recommend particularly theſe which follow: The Hiſtory of the Creation, and of the Fall of Man, and the Promiſes of Mercy through Chriſt: the Hiſtory of the Flood, and of the Deſtruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*; and of the Sufferings and Advancement of *Joſeph*, in the Book of *Geneſis*.

The Hiſtory of the Sufferings and Deliverance of the *Iſraelites*; as alſo of the Law, of the Ten Commandments, and of the terrible Manner in which it was publiſhed, in the Book of *Exodus*.

Read in the twenty fourth Chapter of *Leviticus*, the Sin and Puniſhment of *Shelomith*'s Son, who blaſphemed the Name of the Lord, and curſed, and by God's command was ſtoned to Death; the dreadful Puniſhment of Sedition and Rebellion, in the ſixteenth Chapter of *Numbers*.

Read the fifth, twenty ſeventh, twenty eighth, and twenty ninth Chapters of *Deuteronomy*; and in the three latter, the greateſt Diſcouragements from Sin, and a great Variety of Motives to good Living.

In the ſeventeenth Chapter of the firſt Book of *Samuel*, the combat of *David* with *Goliah* is deſcribed, and the Particulars which concern it; being very fit to excite to Faith, and pious Confidence in God, who brings about his Purpoſes to the Confuſion of proud and haughty Scorners, by the moſt unlikely Means.

Solomon's Choice of Wiſdom offers itſelf to us, in the third Chapter of the firſt Book of *Kings*; in the thirteenth, ſeven-

ſeventeenth, and eighteenth Chapters, we may view ſeveral illuſtrious Proofs of God's Providence, and of the ſpecial Care he takes of his faithful Servants.

In the firſt Book of *Chronicles*, the twenty eighth Chapter, particularly at the ninth Verſe, we may read, and it will be worth the frequent Reading, King *David*'s Charge before his Death to his Son King *Solomon*; *Know thou the God of thy Father, and ſerve Him with a perfect Heart, and with a willing Mind. For the Lord ſearcheth all Hearts and underſtandeth all the Imaginations of the Thoughts. If thou ſeek him, he will be found of thee; but if thou forſake him, he will caſt thee off for ever.*

In the thirty fourth and thirty fifth Chapters of the ſecond Book of *Chronicles*, we have the pious Life and ſorrowful Death of King *Joſiah*.

In the thirty ſixth Chapter, God's merciful Dealing with the People of the *Jews*, in the Warnings he gave them, the ill Returns they made, and the dreadful Effects of their Ingratitude, appear-

ing in their incorrigible perſiſting in their Sins, are ſo ſet forth, as to be fit to affect and terrify.

The Confeſſion in the ninth Chapter of *Ezra* is very exemplary; as is the religious Manner of Reading and Hearing the Law, in the eighth Chapter of *Nehemiah*, ver. 5, 6. *And Ezra opened the Book in the Sight of all the People,— and when he opened it, all the People ſtood up: And Ezra bleſſed the Lord the great God: And all the People anſwered Amen, Amen, with lifting up their Hands: And they bowed their Heads, and worſhipped the Lord with their Faces to the Ground.* In the ninth Chapter of the ſame Book, there is a great Variety of extraordinary Remarkables. There is particularly a ſhort Hiſtory of God's Providence in his Dealings with the *Iſraelites*, and of the unworthy Return they made.

The Book of *Eſther*, where the Name of God is not once mentioned, contains many Inſtances, in which the divine Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs are brightly viſible.

In

In the Book of *Job*, read more frequently the firſt, the ſecond, the fourteenth, the nineteenth, the twenty third, the twenty ſeventh, thirty firſt, thirty ſecond, and forty ſecond Chapters.

In the Book of *Pſalms*, the firſt, the fourth, eighth, eighteenth, nineteenth, twenty ſecond, twenty fifth, thirty fourth, thirty ſixth, thirty ſeventh, the fiftieth, ſeventy third, eighty fourth, ninetieth, ninety firſt, hundred and third, hundred and ſeventh, hundred and eighteenth, hundred and nineteenth, hundred and forty ſixth; and the ſeven Penitential *Pſalms*, being the ſixth, thirty ſecond, thirty eighth, fifty firſt, hundred and ſecond, hundred and thirtieth, hundred and forty third.

In the *Proverbs*, the firſt, the third, the ſixth, the eleventh, fifteenth, twenty ſecond, twenty third, twenty fourth, twenty ſeventh, twenty eighth, twenty ninth, and thirty firſt Chapters; in which laſt, the Deſcription of a good Wife, who is a great Bleſſing to her Huſband, her Family, her Neighbours, well deſerves to be conſidered.

The

The firſt and ſecond Chapters of *Eccleſiaſtes*, will teach us to underſtand the World; ſhew us that the Sum total of all is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit, *Ch.* i. 14. The twelfth Chapter will be a very proper Exerciſe of Children's Memories; and contain ſuch important Truths and Duties, as it will be the Happineſs of Young and Old effectually to remember. *Remember now thy Creator in the Days of thy Youth:* ſo the Chapter begins: *Let us hear the Concluſion of the whole Matter: Fear God, and keep his Commandments: for this is the whole Duty of Man: For God ſhall bring every Work into Judgment, with every ſecret Thing, whether it be good or evil.* So it ends.

In the Prophet *Iſaiah*, let me recommend to your Reading, the firſt, fifth, and eleventh Chapters; the Hiſtory of the Defeat of *Sennacherib*; of the Sickneſs and Recovery of *Hezekiah*, in the thirty ſixth and following Chapters; the Account of God's Love to, and Care of his Church, in the forty ninth; the Reaſonableneſs of Truſting in Him, in the fifty firſt; at the twelfth and thirteenth

Verſes

Verſes of which, we find theſe Words: *I, even I am he that comforteth you. Who art thou, that thou ſhouldſt be afraid of Man that ſhall die, and the Son of Man that ſhall be made as Graſs? And forgetteſt the Lord thy Maker, that hath ſtretched forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth? and haſt feared continually every Day, becauſe of the Fury of the Oppreſſor, as if he were ready to deſtroy? And where is the Fury of the Oppreſſor?*

Beyond all the Reſt, let me preſs the frequent and ſerious Reading of the fifty third Chapter of this Prophecy; of which *John* late Earl of *Rocheſter* ſaid, when God had humbled him by Afflictions, and made him fit for divine Inſtructions, That as he heard it read, he felt an inward Force, which did ſo inlighten his Mind, and convince him, that he could reſiſt it no longer. For the Words had an Authority which did ſhoot like Rays or Beams in his Mind: So that he was not only convinced by the Reaſonings he had about it, which ſatisfied his Underſtanding; but by a Power which did ſo effectually conſtrain him, that he did

ever

ever after as firmly believe in his Saviour, as if he had ſeen him in the Clouds. *Some Paſſages of the Life and Death of* John *Earl of* Rocheſter, *page* 141, 142.

In the Prophet *Jeremy*, read the fifth Chapter, particularly Verſe twenty two. *Fear ye not me, ſaith the Lord? Will ye not tremble at my Preſence, which have placed the Sand for the Bound of the Sea, by a perpetual Decree, that it cannot paſs it; and tho' the Waves thereof toſs themſelves, yet can they not prevail; tho' they roar, yet can they not paſs over it?*

As alſo the ſeventeenth, eighteenth, and thirty firſt Chapters: in the thirty firſt, and following Verſes of which laſt, we have a large and excellent Account of that New Covenant referred to in the eighth Chapter of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*; and Chapter thirty five, we have a great Example of Obedience in the *Rechabites*.

From the fifty ſecond Chapter, by the terrible Sufferings of King *Zedekiah*, the greateſt of Men may learn to ſtand in Awe of God, to be humble and moderate,

derate, and under a conſtant Senſe of the Uncertainty of the Enjoyments of this World; as alſo from King *Jehoiachim*'s Advancement in the thirty ſeventh Year of his Captivity, not to deſpond, much leſs to deſpair, upon the long Continuance of Adverſity. And the third Chapter of the ſame Prophet's *Lamentations:* The third, the eleventh, eighteenth, thirty third, and thirty ſixth Chapters of the Prophet *Ezekiel.*

The third, fourth, fifth, and ſixth Chapters of the Prophet *Daniel*, cannot be ſeriouſly peruſed without Admiration at the diſcovering of God's Wiſdom, Power, Goodneſs and Juſtice, in the Tranſactions of his Providence; with which mighty Kings were exceedingly affected, as it appears by their Words and Actions upon Record there. Let not the twelfth Chapter be omitted.

In the Prophecy of the Prophet *Jonah*, we ſee enough to make the Diſobedient tremble, and the Penitent hope, under the moſt terrible Denunciations of Judgment. What can be more encouraging to ſuch as addreſs themſelves to God by faithful,

faithful, fervent Prayer in their Afflictions, than that which we read at large in the ſecond Chapter, particularly at the ſecond Verſe? *I cried, by reaſon of my Affliction, unto the Lord, and he heard me: Out of the Belly of Hell cried I, and thou heardeſt my Voice.* Of the Prevalence of ſincere and general Repentance, the laſt Verſe of the third Chapter affords an Example never to be forgotten: *God ſaw their Works, that they turned from their evil Way: and God repented of the Evil that he had ſaid that he would do unto them, and he did it not.*

The fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh Chapters of the Prophet *Micah*; the Prophecy of *Habakkuk*, the ſecond Chapter in ſpecial; Verſes fifteen and ſixteen, againſt provoking to immoderate Drinking; and the ſeventeenth and eighteenth Verſes of the third Chapter, which excite to truſt in God in the moſt unfavourable Circumſtances, call for and will reward our Attention. Read the Prophecy of *Haggai*; in the ſecond Chapter of which, at the ſeventh, eighth, and ninth Verſes, we have an illuſtrious Prophecy of our Lord's coming in the Time of the ſecond Temple;

ple; the Evidence of which cannot, but with great Abſurdity, be oppoſed by ſuch as own the Authority of the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament; out of which, what I further recommend to frequent Peruſal, you may read in the fifth, twelfth, and thirteenth Chapters of *Zachary*; and in the Prophecy of *Malachi*, more eſpecially in the third Chapter, at the ſixteenth, ſeventeenth and eighteenth Verſes, which ſhew us how Religion was exerciſed in the former Ages of the World, what Acceptance and what Encouragement it met with from God, and what Satisfaction it ſhall find at laſt.

In the New Teſtament, read in the Goſpel of St. *Matthew*, the Hiſtory of our Lord's Birth; his Sermon on the Mount, which ſtruck the Hearers with Admiration; he teaching them as one having Authority, far beyond that of the *Scribes*; add the Account of the laſt Judgment; of our Lord's Paſſion; and of the firſt Inſtitution of the Sacrament of his laſt Supper; and of his glorious Reſurrection, which no Malice was ſubtle and powerful enough to defeat.

In

In the ſixth Chapter of St. *Mark*, at the twentieth Verſe, we have a ſhort but excellent Character of St. *John the Baptiſt*; and an Account of the Value *Herod* had for him; and in thoſe that follow, of his Sufferings. In the firſt Chapter of St. *Luke*, we have a farther Account of that admirable Man; as alſo a Relation of the Notice the bleſſed Virgin had from God, by the Angel *Gabriel*, that ſhe was to be the Mother of our Lord; and of the humble Manner in which ſhe received the divine Meſſage. In the ſecond Chapter, we have the moſt comfortable Proclamations of our Lord's Birth, by a heavenly Herald, and the Celebration of it by the heavenly Hoſt.

In the fourth Chapter, every pious Soul will delight to read the Victory our Lord obtained, by the Sword of the Spirit, over the great Enemy of Mankind, after he had by Faſting prepared himſelf for the great Encounter. The fifteenth Chapter preſents us with the very affecting Parable of the Prodigal Son; in which we ſee the Miſery his Wickedneſs brought him to; the happy Courſe he reſolved upon and took, when his

his Sufferings had brought him to himſelf; and the Reception he met with from his Father, to the great Encouragement of all truly penitent Sinners.

The different Conditions of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, which we cannot fail to read in the ſixteenth Chapter, let us ſee, how much it concerns us, while we have Opportunity, to take Care that we come not to that Place of Torment; where there is no Relief to be had, and from whence there is no Removal.

The Example of the penitent Thief may be read at large in the fortieth and two following Verſes of the twenty third Chapter; and in the next, our Lord's moſt encouraging Anſwer to that Petition, admirable for the Faith that appears in it, which he offered to our Lord then hanging upon the Croſs; *And he ſaid unto Jeſus, Lord, remember me when thou comeſt into thy Kingdom; and Jeſus ſaid, Verily, I ſay unto thee, To-day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.*

In the Goſpel of St. *John*, read often the firſt, third, fifth, ſixth, and eleventh Chap-

Chapters; in the eleventh particularly the Hiſtory of the Reſurrection of *Lazarus* *, the fourth Day after he had been buried; an Example excellently fitted to confirm our Faith, and encourage our Hope of a Reſurrection.

* τεταρταῖος γὰρ ἐστι, xi. 39.

Read the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, and ſeventeenth Chapters; in the laſt of them, we have our Lord's divine Prayer for his Diſciples and other Chriſtians, and eſpecially for that Unity, by the Want of which, Chriſtendom hath ſo frequently, ſo long, and ſo dreadfully ſuffered; and doth at preſent, to the Grief of all good Chriſtians, ſuffer.

In the twenty firſt Chapter, the Proof our Lord required of St. *Peter*'s Love to him, the Feeding of his Lambs and Sheep, deſerves to be conſidered in a more ſpecial Manner by thoſe, whoſe Office requires it of them.

The firſt, ſecond, third, fourth, fifth, ſixth, and ſeventh Chapters of the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, will encourage us to read them frequently, by the Account they give

give of the Primitive Church; the Way of living in it, after Admiſſion into it by Baptiſm; the Manner in which God appeared for it; of the Actions and Sufferings of the Apoſtles; and of the firſt Martyr St. *Stephen*; whoſe excellent Apology, whoſe pious and charitable Death, and the Encouragement he had from Heaven to undergo it, will be read to the great Satisfaction of all good Chriſtians. Add the tenth Chapter of the ſame Book, wherein we have the Character and Example of *Cornelius* the Centurion; the ſpecial Notice God took of his Prayers and Alms, and an Account of his Converſion to Chriſtianity, by the Miniſtry of St. *Peter*; whom he ſent for by divine Direction. In the eleventh Chapter, read St. Peter's Apology for himſelf, after he had been with, and had preached to the *Gentiles*; the Miſſion of *Barnabas*, his Character and Succeſs, and an Example of primitive Charity. In the twelfth Chapter, we have the Death of St. *James*; the wonderful Deliverance of St. *Peter*, upon the Prayers of the Church; and the remarkable Death of *Herod* the Perſecutor, who was ſmitten by an Angel, becauſe he gave not God

the Glory; ſo as to be eaten to Death with Worms. In the ſixteenth, the Sufferings of St. *Paul* and *Silas*; the Occaſion of them, and the comfortable Manner in which they underwent them; their Deliverance, and the Jaylor of *Philippi*'s Converſion, will always be a great Entertainment to pious Chriſtians. In the ſeventeenth, St. *Paul*'s Sermon in the Court of the *Areopagites*, to the *Athenians*, particularly about the Day of Judgment; and the Acceptance it met with, ought to be ſeriouſly conſidered. St. *Paul's* Diſcourſe at *Miletus* to the Elders of the Church, whom he ſent for from *Epheſus*, is ſuch as well deſerves to be conſtantly before the Eyes of the Clergy, as repreſenting them with an Example, which to have followed, will be Matter of Joy to all Eternity. In the twenty fourth Chapter, St. *Paul*'s Diſcourſe before *Felix*, and therein, the Account of his Faith, Hope, and Practice; and his Apology before King *Agrippa* in the twenty ſixth, wherein there is a Relation of his miraculous Converſion, and of the Deſign upon which he was ſent to the *Gentiles*; are worthy of the moſt ſerious Thoughts.

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The Preſervation and Deliverance of St. *Paul*, and of thoſe that ſailed with him, upon his Account, in the twenty ſeventh Chapter, will much encourage good Chriſtians to Dependance upon God, in the greateſt Difficulties and Dangers of this Life.

In the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, read the firſt Chapter, more eſpecially the fourth Verſe, concerning our Lord's Reſurrection; and the twentieth, concerning the Knowledge of God by the Light of Nature; the eighth Chapter, concerning the Influence and Aſſiſtance of the holy Spirit, the Death, Reſurrection, and Interceſſion of our Lord. The twelfth, where we have a great Variety of Chriſtian Duties briefly enumerated, and ſo eaſily to be remembered; the thirteenth, where the great and neceſſary Duties of Subjection to the higher Powers, *not only for Wrath, but for Conſcience ſake*, is more eſpecially required, as alſo that Love which is the fulfilling of the Law.

In the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, the firſt Chapter, the ſecond, the third, and ſixth; the tenth at the ſixteenth

Verſe, about the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper; and the thirty firſt, about doing all to God's Glory, call for a ſpecial Regard. In the eleventh Chapter, the Inſtitution of that holy Sacrament; our Duty to prepare for receiving it, by examining ourſelves; and the Danger of receiving it unworthily, are plainly ſet before us, and ought to be frequently peruſed.

In the thirteenth Chapter, we have an Account of the Neceſſity and excellent Properties of Charity; in the fifteenth, the Proofs of that fundamental and exceedingly comfortable Article of the Reſurrection from the Dead; and the Account of the Manner in which the Bodies of good Chriſtians ſhall be raiſed; and the Influence the Doctrine of the Reſurrection ought to have upon us at the laſt Verſe, require our Eyes and Thoughts.

In the ſecond Epiſtle, mindful of the Brevity I deſign, let me only recommend the fourth, fifth, and tenth Chapters, as treating of eternal Things; of the laſt Judgment, and the new Creature,

ture, which muſt make it happy to us; and of Reconciliation to God, who was in Chriſt reconciling the World to himſelf; which otherwiſe muſt have been wholly under his Wrath for ever. And the laſt of the Three, as treating of our ſpiritual Warfare and Armour, and the Effects of it, in the third, fourth, and fifth Verſes, in a very uncommon Manner.

In the Epiſtle to the *Galatians*, the twentieth Verſe of the ſecond Chapter, concerning the Apoſtle's being crucified with Chriſt, and yet living; the latter Part of the fifth, where the Works of the Fleſh, and the Fruits of the Spirit, are reckoned up; and the ten firſt Verſes of the ſixth Chapter, where are many choice Exhortations, invite us to diligent Reading.

In the fifth and ſixth Chapters of the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, we have a ſhort View of the relative Duties of Huſbands and Wives; Parents and Children; Maſters and Servants; which ſuch ought continually to read and think on. The ſixth Chapter ſupplies us with a Relation of that whole Armour, which every

good Chriſtian will be glad to read of, and careful to provide and put on, that he may be able to ſtand againſt the Wiles of the Devil.

The whole Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, the devout Chriſtan will often read.

The third and fourth Chapters of the Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians* agree with the fifth and ſixth Chapters of the Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, as to relative Duties; and the third affords much Encouragement to read it as to other Particulars, from the firſt to the eighteenth Verſe; where the Account of relative Duties begins; and is continued to the ſecond Verſe of the following Chapter.

In the fourth Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*, from the thirteenth Verſe, there is a Diſcourſe concerning Death, under the Notion of Sleep; and of our Lord's ſecond Coming, and the Manner of it, continued in the fifth Chapter, and there followed by many Exhortations to Duties, the Performance of which will adorn a Chriſtian's Life, and a proper Prayer or Wiſh.

The

The firſt and ſecond Epiſtles to *Timothy*, and that to *Titus*, are in a ſpecial Manner recommended to the Reading of Clergymen; who may there, as in a clear Glaſs, ſee their Duty; may be furniſhed with the beſt Canons, Rules, and Directions, with Reference to Doctrine and Life; to themſelves and their Families; to the Worſhip of God, Eccleſiaſtical Government, and the Diſcipline of the Church.

The Epiſtle to *Philemon* contains an affectionate Addreſs to him from St. *Paul*; recommending *Oneſimus*, whom of an unprofitable Servant, Converſon to the Chriſtian Religion had made uſeful to his Maſter, and to the Apoſtle; as it will make all thoſe that attain to the ſame Happineſs far more ſerviceable than otherwiſe they could have been.

In the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, the firſt Chapter, concerning the divine Excellency of our Lord, *who is the Brightneſs of his Father's Glory, and the expreſs Image of his Perſon:* the fourth, and the ſixth, where are many excellent Things; the eighth, the ninth and tenth, concerning

the New Covenant, and the bleſſed Mediator of it; the eleventh, wherein we are encouraged to the Exerciſe of Faith by the great Things it hath done; by the glorious Triumph it hath been honoured with; the twelfth, wherein we have an Exhortation to Patience from the Example of our Lord; where the Advantages of Affliction, and the Neceſſity of Peace and Holineſs, are ſet beforce us, and particularly call for our Attention.

The Epiſtle of St. *James* hath many Remarkables in it about Joy under Afflictions; living ſuitably to our Profeſſion; joining Works with Faith; concerning the Tongue, and the Government of it; the Uncertainty of the World; Behaviour in Sickneſs and Affliction; beſides much of Inſtruction from the Examples of *Job* and *Elias*; which will encourage us to read it frequently.

The firſt Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle of St. *Peter*, wherein the Apoſtle treats of the heavenly Inheritance, and of the Holineſs that muſt fit us for it: the ſecond, wherein we may read our Duty to

the King as Supreme; and unto Governors, as unto them that are ſent by him; and to all Men and Chriſtians: the fifth, wherein there is a ſpecial Addreſs to the Clergy, and the beſt of Motives to perſuade them to their Duty, from the Promiſe of that Crown of Glory which fadeth not away, invite us to a diligent Peruſal.

In the firſt Chapter of the ſecond Epiſtle, the golden Chain of Graces, to be added to one another for the compleating a Chriſtian: in the ſecond, the Example of God's Juſtice, and of his Mercy: in the third, the End of all Things, and the Uſe to be made of it, will deſerve to be often read and conſider'd.

In the firſt Chapter of the firſt Epiſtle of St *John*, the illuſtrious Teſtimony given to the Chriſtian Religion, and the Denial of ſinleſs Perfection: in the ſecond, the Account of our Advocate with the Father, of the World, and of the Danger of loving it: in the third, the Love of God to us, and the Love we ought to have for one another; of both which, more in the fourth Chapter: in the fifth the Means of obtaining Victory over the World,

World, and the great Doctrine of the Three that bear Record in Heaven; in whose Name, or into the Acknowledgment of whom, we are Baptized, call for our most serious Thoughts. Upon this last great Subject, let me recommend Bishop *Stillingfleet*'s Vindication of the Doctrine of the Trinity, *page* 164, 165, *&c.*

εἰς τὸ ὄνομα. Matt. xxviii. 19.

The Epistle of St. *Jude* agrees with the second of St. *Peter*; and besides the terrible Examples of God's Wrath, has that ancient Prophecy of *Enoch*, the Seventh from *Adam*, concerning the Day of Judgment, which is fitted to awaken the most secure and careless Sinners.

In the Book of the *Revelation* of St. *John*, the first Chapter, which describes our Lord's Coming; the Epistles to the seven Churches in the two next Chapters; the Account of the Day of Judgment, in the twentieth; of the Punishment of the Wicked, and of the glorious Reward of good Men and Christians, which follows, contains all I shall further offer under this third Head.

The

The fourth Method is: That ſuch as really and neceſſarily want Leiſure, ſhould frequently read the Book of *Pſalms*, and the Epiſtles and Goſpels for the ſeveral Lord's Days, and other Feſtivals and Faſts.

In the Uſe of the *Pſalms*, we ſhall preſent to God divinely inſpired Prayers and Praiſes continually; and be fitted, by admirable Inſtruction and Examples, to offer them up.

In the Goſpels, there is a large Account of the Myſtery of our Redemption; in the Epiſtles, great Variety of Chriſtian Duties. The firſt [the Goſpels] being (as an eminent Perſon hath obſerved) a Record of the Life and Death of our bleſſed Saviour; the latter, Inſtructions for the Edification of the Church in Pious and Chriſtian Converſation. *Preface to a Collection of Offices, or Forms of Prayer, in Caſes ordinary and extraordinary*, 8vo. Lond. 1658.

To the *Pſalms*, Epiſtles, and Goſpels, if Care be taken to add the Collects that are before theſe latter, and the Lord's Prayer;

Prayer; the ſhort Service will be ſo much the more compleat, and be the more likely to be advantageous to them, who, becauſe they have not Time for more, ſhall think fit to uſe it.

The fifth and laſt Method. In Order to Preparation for the Sacrament of our Lord's Supper; a Duty of very great Importance and Conſequence, and which ought to be of frequent Return; let me recommend that choice Collection out of the Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament, which the Church of *England* has directed and required to be read the Week before *Eaſter* Yearly; where we have Prophecies concerning our Lord's Sufferings; the Hiſtory of them at large in the Goſpel; the Inſtitution of that bleſſed Sacrament, in the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, Chapter the eleventh; and proper Readings out of the Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, and to the *Hebrews*. All which are fit to inſtruct and affect us; to excite us to a Hatred of Sin; to provoke us to the Love of God the Father, and of his bleſſed Son, who died for us; and to the Love of our Neighbours; to con-

firm

firm and increaſe our Faith, and to ſtrengthen our Hope; and to encourage us *to run with Patience*, and Thankfulneſs, *the Race which is ſet before us.*

A Prayer to be uſed before Reading the Holy Scripture; being the Collect for the ſecond Sunday *in* Advent.

'BLeſſed Lord, who haſt cauſed all 'Holy Scriptures to be written for 'our Learning; Grant that we may in 'ſuch wiſe hear them, read, mark, learn, 'and inwardly digeſt them; that by 'Patience and Comfort of thy holy 'Word, we may embrace and ever hold 'faſt the bleſſed Hope of everlaſting 'Life, which thou haſt given us in our 'Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. *Amen.*'

Glory to God in the Higheſt, and on Earth Peace, good Will towards Men.

FINIS.

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